

The Show Shop in the Summertime

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN was in love only with opera. When he turned his attention to any other interpretative art the digression was but temporary. His theatre in Harlem was occupied from time to time by stock companies when the regular seasons were at an end, but he took little share in their direction. The Victoria Theatre had its dramatic seasons with such eminent figures as Eleonora Duse to play there. The Italian gave her famous season of *d'Annunzio* dramas where the *Rialto* now stands. Sadie Martinot played there a version of Augier's *Le Mariage d'Olympe*, by Clyde Fitch, and Miss de Wolfe acted in another play by the same author, called *"The Way of the World,"* with so little material success that Mr. Hammerstein had an opportunity to show his occasional ruthlessness by ending this engagement suddenly on the ground that the receipts had fallen below the guarantee. In drama, pure and simple, he could rarely interest himself. Naturally he was sought out by the actors. One night an emotional actress, more or less well known in her day, held a long colloquy with the manager in his office at the Victoria. She had a play and she wanted Mr. Hammerstein to interest himself in its production to the extent of giving the use of his theatre. After a while she walked across the sidewalk to her automobile and departed. Mr. Hammerstein looked dubious.

"She's a nice woman," he said to one of his companions, "and I like her. She has a play by Robert Buchanan and she is sure it will be a great success, especially if it is acted at the Victoria. But I am a little afraid of it in spite of all she says. Now you see, it is positively necessary to the play that she have a brown Newfoundland dog three feet and a half high with a white spot on its back. Now, if that dog is so indispensable to the play what in the world would happen if we could not get the dog? Suppose there was a dog only three feet high or one without a white spot in the right place or one that wasn't brown. No, I guess I won't take any chances on that play. I'm afraid of that brown dog three and a half feet high with a white spot on its back."

Although he was satisfied to pose merely as a theatre landlord when the stage was devoted to dramatic entertainments, his finesse in showmanship did not desert him. He was uncommonly discerning in this field. After opera had been forbidden at the Manhattan Opera House he tried there some Sunday vaudeville performances. They were sparsely attended.

"Vaudeville," said Mr. Hammerstein, who always learned from such an experience, "is local. The audiences which fill a theatre to see a variety show must come from the region in which the theatre is situated. There are such exceptions, for instance, as a theatre so well known that crowds will be attracted to attend it. But



GRACE GEORGE IN "SHE WOULD AND SHE DID"

merely for the sake of a vaudeville programme the audiences will be from the neighborhood."

That opinion has come to be recognized by theatre entrepreneurs as a truth. Mr. Hammerstein, while he conducted the present New York Theatre as a vaudeville establishment did not disdain an occasional share in the authorship of the crude sketches which he enjoyed scattering through the programmes of the season. The burlesque on the infamous Seelye dinner he in a measure superintended and gave shelter to W. A. Brady when he brought Fernald's *"The Cat and the Cherub"* here to steal a march on



LAURA WALKER IN "THOSE WHO WALK IN DARKNESS"

Charles Frohman, who was later to produce Powers's *"The First Born"* in New York. But there had to be music somewhere to inspire his interest to the fullest extent. So when he set to work to combine living pictures, popular here years ago, and the ballet he achieved a really successful result. Putting the leading figures in the popular operas as a tableau, they were shown to the audience. Then to the best known numbers from *"Faust,"* *"Tannhauser,"* or some other equally familiar opera, the dancers went through a series of appropriate steps. Mr. Hammerstein had but little interest for any spectacles of which music was not a part.

LEE and J. J. Shubert will present at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre on Monday night a new comedy drama, *"Those Who Walk in Darkness."* This three act play, which is a dramatization by Owen Davis of Perley Poore Sheehan's novel by that name, will be interpreted by a cast headed by Amy Ricard, Laura Walker, Donald Gallagher and Arthur Shaw. In this play Miss Walker, who was last seen as one of the featured players in *"The Man Who Came Back,"* impersonates a young girl, *Viola Stoen*, who resides in a boarding house of dubious reputation, kept by a Mrs. Morse, impersonated by Amy Ricard. Arthur Shaw will be seen as Alec Breen, the keeper of a night lunch wagon, with an ambition to be known as *"The Sandwich King."* A young country boy, *Rufus Underwood*, impersonated by Donald Gallagher, comes to New York and stops at Mrs. Morse's boarding house. *Viola Stoen* nurses him through a serious illness. *Rufus*, knowing of *Viola's* past, marries her and takes her to his up-State home. *Rufus* has relatives and, as may be expected, they, having discovered her antecedents, make it lively for *Viola*. There enters into the story *Jessie Schofield*, impersonated by Consuelo Bailey, a young girl who takes a violent fancy for *Alec Breen*, the sandwich king. She is about to enter upon a fast life which *Viola* saves her from that fate. *Viola*, too, comes through all her troubles to the entire satisfaction of her husband and his deplorable relatives. Other members of the cast are George W. Wilson, Helen Tracy, Katherine Sheldon and Howard Kyle. Irving Pichel staged the production.

Grace George will open her season at the Vanderbilt Theatre on Tuesday evening. Miss George will be presented by William A. Brady in *"She Would and She Did,"* a new American comedy by Mark Red. In *"She Would and She Did,"* described as a comedy about people you know, Miss George will be supported by a cast including John Cromwell, Cora



CATHERINE VAN PELT, JOSEPHINE LLORINE AND MURIEL LODGE

Faune" and the *"Tannhauser"* overture, with Vera Barstow, violinist, and Frederick Gunster, tenor, as the soloists.

Tuesday's "opera night" will feature as soloists Olive Nevins, soprano; George Reinher, tenor, and the Stadium Quartet, including Idelle Patterson, Lillian Eubank, Ernest Davis and Earle Tuckerman. Selections from the operas of Weber, Verdi, Mozart, Wagner are included in the programme.

The Wednesday night soloists are Robert Maitland, bass-barytone, and Alice Moncrieff, contralto, the former in an aria from Wagner's *"Flying Dutchman,"* and the latter in a group of songs by Francis Hopkinson, the earliest American composer. The orchestra list includes a new *"Ocean Rhapsody"* conducted by the composer, Frank E. Ward, and a miscellaneous

programme from Svendsen, Wagner, Rubinstein, Dvorak, Desormes, Rimsky-Korsakov and Brahms.

Emil Oberhofer, conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, will be the guest conductor Thursday night, with Marjorie Church, pianist, who will play Rachmaninoff's Concerto in C minor. Mr. Oberhofer's choosing includes the *"Mignon"* overture, Tchaikowsky's Symphony No. 4, F minor, Schubert's *"Finlandia"* and Strauss's *"Blue Danube."*

Verdi's *"Aida,"* given in concert form last Tuesday, was so cordially received that it is to be repeated next Friday night with the same cast, including Olga Carrara, Ernest Davis, Lillian Eubank, Earle Tuckerman, Nicolas Zai and M. Herodias, the vocalists of the Metropolitan Opera chorus.

Soloists for next Saturday's popular night are Marguerite Fontrose, mezzo-soprano; Mayo Wadler, violinist, and James Goddard, barytone, and the following Sunday night will be devoted to a Wagner-Tchaikowsky programme, with Albert Jampolski, barytone, as soloist.

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MANY who have seen *"A Voice in the Dark,"* the Woods melodramatic novelty at the Republic Theatre, have been struck by the realistic portrayal of a blind man by William B. Mack. Especially noteworthy is the effect produced when Mr. Mack's face is in repose—the vacant, pitiful, helpless expression is stimulated with such verity as to excite general comment.

"Do you rehearse the expression before a mirror or do you keep your eyes closed?" Mr. Mack was asked.

"I used to do the former about twenty years ago," said Mr. Mack, smiling. "No, I do not keep my eyes closed, except for a second or two at a time. But I will tell you what does happen—I don't see. I don't mean to say that I deliberately avoid seeing. I mean that I look and get visual impressions, but that these impressions don't register on my brain."

"And the effect lasts for some time afterward. I don't see people and things intelligently. My eyes see; my mind does not."

"It is a simple and common case of acting and self-hypnosis; of the sinking of the man in the role. It is free-

quent not only with actors but with authors and managers and all who are directly or indirectly associated with the world of make-believe."

"Everybody knows how Richard Mansfield became submerged in the roles he created. And the eccentricities of Clyde Fitch, which were partly natural, were in a great measure the result of intimate association with a world in which nothing was real but unreality. Everybody knows the prominent theatrical manager whose almost stage picturesqueness and strangeness of attire has had almost as much to do with his reputation as his plays."

"John Cumberland once told me that hiding under beds has given him a future manner which he can't shake off. He seems to be always on the lookout for an irate husband or an open window. Louis Mann says that he was never quite able to shake off the varying emotions of his role in *'Friendly Enemies.'* Max Marcin once half laughingly told me that a friend had remarked to him that he was beginning to act and look like a detective."

"In *'A Voice in the Dark'* Miss Wyndham, Mr. Gordon and Miss Hall play a scene in pantomime. To 'cue' themselves, as it were, they move their lips, and I've noticed that the action continues, like a reflex, after they come off the stage. And Miss Arnold, who plays the deaf woman, justly remarked that she finds herself growing a little deaf after each performance."

"I realize that there is nothing scientifically startling in this. Mental sug-

gestion is by this time an old science. But I have never seen it discussed in connection with the work of the actor."

MR. BLINN'S IDEALS.

IN his appearance as the star of *"The Challenge,"* the new play by Eugene Walter at the Selwyn Theatre, Holbrook Blinn is but keeping faith with precedents set by himself. There is no name more closely associated with important movements in the theatre than that of Mr. Blinn. He has proved himself a man of abiding convictions and an artist not afraid to express them. Beginning with his sponsorship of the Princess Players, he has aimed at the betterment of the theatre in every direction, sacrificing personal gain in many instances for the sake of an idea. Conscious of the interests the reading public evinces in the short story as a form of literature and knowing that the successful presentation of the short story in dramatic form had been accomplished in France, Mr. Blinn spent a considerable amount of time, money and talent in establishing a repertory of short plays in an American theatre, when some years ago he took over the Princess Theatre in this city for that purpose. Speaking to the writer of the financial failure of the venture, Mr. Blinn expressed faith that its success is yet probable.

"It is an positive that the short and unusual play is of great value," he said. "I am equally sure that my sponsorship of such an idea for the American stage would have met with a greater appreciation had we had a larger theatre than the Princess. The little playhouse is too small for the

proletariat, and it is the man who goes to the theatre because he loves it—the man who pays a dollar for a seat and isn't concerned about whether he is wearing a soft collar or evening clothes—who is the supporter of the unusual in the theatre."

"He is the same chap who goes to the opera and pays a dollar for a seat up near the ceiling rather than stay home because he hasn't the price of one in the pit. He is willing to sit anywhere that he can afford to sit because he truly loves the opera, and his counterpart in the playhouse is the man who craves ideas and their artistic expression. That was the object of the Princess Players—real ideas and their artistic expression, and I still feel very confident that my venture in this direction would have had a big success had I had a playhouse with plenty of dollar seats."

Correct or incorrect as Mr. Blinn may be in this supposition there is no doubt that he sponsored a big purpose in his direction of the Princess Players, a purpose which has not diminished in his more recent affiliations with the drama, for in practically every play in which Mr. Blinn has since appeared it has been with noteworthy aim.

Following his guidance of the Princess Players came *"Moloch,"* the great preachment against war, which was written by Beulah Dix, and of which Mr. Blinn was the dominating figure. Because the production of this important piece of literature came in 1914, when America had already begun her preparation it was short-lived, but none the less an example of the actor's serious career. Following this two years later when America's entrance into the war became inevitable, Mr. Blinn produced a play called *"If,"* which was aimed to awaken the American mind to the consequences of our failure to crush the Hun. Although he did not personally appear in it, *"If"* was the expression of the further helpful aim of its sponsor, and soon after this he gave a great service to the British and Canadian mission by the arrangement of *"Getting Together,"* of which he wrote the most part and in which he appeared with Blanche Bates both in New York and throughout America. Through it more than a million dollars of Liberty Bonds were sold; thousands of recruits were gained, and thousands of dollars raised for the mission.

KELLY PASSED THE HAT.

"DO YOU know what 'bushkin' is?" Harry Kelly asked the interviewer. The chief fun-maker in *"Oh, What a Girl!"* at the Shubert Theatre, sat in his dressing room wearing his rural makeup, his ancient frock coat and rusty "plug" hat, awaiting his cue.

"Bushkin," let me explain," he continued, "is just another term for passing the hat. And that's the way I earned my first salary as a comedian when I was ten years old. I and three other boys about the same age

face bright and shiny with laundry soap and then lead me back to school, where she would lead with the teachers to give me another chance.

"But I continued going to the bow-wow. I was always far more interested in stray dogs than in school books. I used to pick up all the lame and one-eyed mongrels I could find and bring them home. I wasn't allowed to bring them into the house. Instead, I would sit around outside on the steps with them, and I'm sure they had as much sympathy for me as I had for them. Some of those stray dogs were my best friends, too."

"I've still got Lizzie, the variegated dog I had several years ago in 'Watch Your Step.' I got Lizzie at a dog pound in New York, and I wouldn't part with her for anything. And Lizzie never forgets me. On the opening night of 'Oh, What a Girl!' I received a telegram reading: 'Good luck and best wishes from your old pal Lizzie.' So you see how faithful Lizzie is even if my wife did send the telegram for her. Perhaps Lizzie will come to join me in this show, and if she does you'd find her mighty interesting material for an interview."

"Lizzie only dates as far back as 'Watch Your Step,' but this makeup of mine dates back to 'His Honor the Mayor,' which, you may remember, ran for many weeks here. That was the first time I ever appeared in this deacon outfit, and it was my first big success, as well. When the part was given to me it was a minor role. The authors included it with the intention of making a small 'bit' of the part. But I built it up, adding different scenes as I saw the opportunity. And when it was put on at the New York Theatre it proved to be the star role. So I've stuck to the deacon makeup ever since."

HUGO RIESENFELD and Josiah Zuro announce the organization of a school of opera, which will be operated in conjunction with the Rialto and Rialto theatres, now under the direction of Mr. Riesenfeld. Mr. Zuro will be the director and will have complete charge of the school, which will be located at the Rialto Theatre, and he will be assisted by a staff of prominent artists. Foremost among them is the well known stage director Jacques Coint, formerly of the Manhattan Opera

House and Century Theatre, where he was responsible for a number of original productions in French and Italian. Mr. Coint will act as stage instructor and teacher of mise en scene.

Joseph Littau, formerly of the Boston Opera Company and now one of the conductors at the Rialto Theatre, and Hans Stiner of the Metropolitan Opera House will coach the pupils in the works of the Italian and French repertory.

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ALLAN DINEHART AND JESSIE GLENDENNING IN "THE CHALLENGE"

decided we'd get up a quartet, and we went down to Coney Island and other outdoor places to try our luck with the crowds and often we had to walk home. But that experience certainly did create an early appetite for the stage that has stuck to me like a relation in distress ever since.

"At any rate, it wasn't any worse than my schoolboy experiences. Nothing could have been worse. For I was thrown out of every school on the East Side of New York, where I was born. I remember how my poor old grandmother used to cry to get them to take me back. She would scrub my

face bright and shiny with laundry soap and then lead me back to school, where she would lead with the teachers to give me another chance.

"But I continued going to the bow-wow. I was always far more interested in stray dogs than in school books. I used to pick up all the lame and one-eyed mongrels I could find and bring them home. I wasn't allowed to bring them into the house. Instead, I would sit around outside on the steps with them, and I'm sure they had as much sympathy for me as I had for them. Some of those stray dogs were my best friends, too."

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MARCIA ABBE IN "THE BETTER OLE"

VARIETY.

PALACE—This house will bow before the insistent midsummer demands for comedy with Jimmy Huxley and his jazz coadjutors in *"Move On!"*; Ciccolini, tenor of the Chicago Grand Opera Company, who will convert everybody to grand opera instantly; Billy Montgomery and Minnie Allen in some high priced foolishness, and Mlle. Nitta Jo, Parisian singer, who will giggle her way through *"La Gigolette Parisienne."*

RIVERSIDE—Clifton Crawford with songs, dances, stories and recitations will do that celebrated athletic stunt of vaudeville called *"running the gamut."* Craig Campbell, tenor, will expose the lighter side of opera, while Pearl Legay and Lester Sheehan will counter with several dances.

AMERICAN—Jean Leighton's Revue will revamp minstrelsy with some new ideas; Clark and Crawford will reveal what a jolly time tramps have, and Katherine and Nellie Durkin will be among others who will follow the pace set by the feature pictures.

NEW BRIGHTON—Carlos Sebastian, who slipped over many a ballroom floor several years ago, will return to the stage here in *"Bubbles,"* a fantasy produced by himself and Arthur Anderson, through which songs and dances are said to run uncontrolled. Olga Myra, his new partner, is said to be able to dance, sing, play the violin, and even more wonderful, to wear gowns. George MacFarlane will carry his barytone voice through a large number of songs, and the Lighter Girls and Newton Alexander will show what vaudeville singers can do if they're not overtrained.

LEE and J. J. Shubert will present at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre on Monday night a new comedy drama, *"Those Who Walk in Darkness."* This three act play, which is a dramatization by Owen Davis of Perley Poore Sheehan's novel by that name, will be interpreted by a cast headed by Amy Ricard, Laura Walker, Donald Gallagher and Arthur Shaw. In this play Miss Walker, who was last seen as one of the featured players in *"The Man Who Came Back,"* impersonates a young girl, *Viola Stoen*, who resides in a boarding house of dubious reputation, kept by a Mrs. Morse, impersonated by Amy Ricard. Arthur Shaw will be seen as Alec Breen, the keeper of a night lunch wagon, with an ambition to be known as *"The Sandwich King."* A young country boy, *Rufus Underwood*, impersonated by Donald Gallagher, comes to New York and stops at Mrs. Morse's boarding house. *Viola Stoen* nurses him through a serious illness. *Rufus*, knowing of *Viola's* past, marries her and takes her to his up-State home. *Rufus* has relatives and, as may be expected, they, having discovered her antecedents, make it lively for *Viola*. There enters into the story *Jessie Schofield*, impersonated by Consuelo Bailey, a young girl who takes a violent fancy for *Alec Breen*, the sandwich king. She is about to enter upon a fast life which *Viola* saves her from that fate. *Viola*, too, comes through all her troubles to the entire satisfaction of her husband and his deplorable relatives. Other members of the cast are George W. Wilson, Helen Tracy, Katherine Sheldon and Howard Kyle. Irving Pichel staged the production.

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